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Thorough Report by Warren Commission

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It has never been proved that demons do not exist. It is logically impossible to do so. Most men, however, have abandoned the belief in them in favor of the more consistent explanations of science.

But there will always be some people who see the machinations of invisible demons behind things that happen.

So it is with the Warren Commission report on the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. It is impossible to "prove" the nonexistence of a conspiracy against the President's life—a conspiracy of which Lee Harvey Oswald was supposedly only the tool, and which included his killer Jack Ruby, the Dallas police, the FBI, the CIA, the Soviet government, Texas oilmen, shadowy extremist groups and just about anybody else imagination can conjure up.

Those who wish to believe in the conspiracy theory, or even in Oswald's innocence, will continue to do so, despite an absolute lack of substantiation and the sheer overwhelming bulk of the evidence meticulously assembled against Oswald.

Experts have termed the commission's accomplishment "the most massive, detailed and convincing piece of detective work ever undertaken."

The commission studied the testimony of no less than 552 witnesses. The full text of their testimony will be published in 15 thick volumes.

This does not close the case, of course. It will never be closed. It contains so much of drama and human pathos, is interwoven with so many unanswerable questions and was so great a shock to the mind and heart that it will remain a vivid national memory.

But no one reading the commission's report with an open mind can fail to be completely convinced that Lee Harvey Oswald did shoot John F. Kennedy to death, that it was the act of a seriously disturbed young man acting alone, and that it was only a long series of tragic accidents and coincidences that gave Oswald the opportunity to perform the great tragedy of the assassination.

There are thus no surprises in the Warren Commission's findings. The immediate effect of the report is to give the lie to the myths. And it will undoubtedly be an invaluable document for historians.

It is to be hoped, though, that it will have another long-term value: That it will help insure, so far as humanly possible, that no more American presidents be murdered.

The commission has made a number of recommendations. It criticized, for instance, the failure of the FBI to notify the Secret Service of Oswald and his presence in Dallas in a building overlooking the President's motorcade.

It is true, even as President Kennedy himself remarked to an aide on the morning of his death, that if someone really wants to kill the President, all he needs is a high-powered rifle with a telescopic sight and there is nothing anyone can do to stop him.

But normal people don't shoot presidents. Of the four assassins who have succeeded, each was a lone psychopath and at least one of them—Oswald—had a long record of irrational behavior. He should have been watched.

If it is impossible for society to salvage its Oswalds in childhood, it should at least prevent them from killing any more presidents.